

LANGUAGES OF SOME TRIBES OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

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For the last eight years I have been endeavoring to obtain original information respecting the sociology, language, folklore and customs generally of the aborigines of Western Australia. Early in 1900 I had the matter sufficiently developed to publish the sociology of the tribes on the sources of the Ord, Fitzroy and Margaret rivers in the Kimberley district.¹ Towards the end of the same year I published a map showing the distribution of various tribes possessing different types of sociology throughout nearly the whole of Western Australia.²

In 1901 I gave further details of the sociology as well as a vocabulary of one hundred and eighteen words of the language spoken in the Kimberley district.³ In 1903 I described some interesting rock paintings and carvings, and supplied vocabularies of the languages of the natives at Roebourne and on the Lower Fitzroy river.⁴ During 1907 I further illustrated the sociology of the tribes between Albany and Perth, and also that of the Erlistoun tribe.⁵ Some of the folklore and customs of the aborigines of Western Australia are now in course of publication by me elsewhere.

In the present monograph I shall briefly deal with the language of some tribes occupying the country approximately from Laverton and Weld Spring eastward to the boundary of South Australia, and extending into the territory of that state for about two hundred miles. The total length of this tract of country may be stated as approximately six hundred and fifty miles and its breadth three hundred miles. Each tribe is treated under a separate heading.

¹ *American Anthropologist*, N. S., pp. 185-187.

² *Proc. Amer. Philos. Soc., Phila.*, xxxix, pp. 89, 123-125, 560-575, with map.

³ *Journ. Roy. Soc. N. S. Wales*, xxxv, pp. 217-222.

⁴ *Queensland Geographical Journal*, xix, pp. 45-72.

⁵ *Ibid.*, xxii, 1907.

THE LORITYA TRIBE.

This tribe is located on both sides of the boundary between Western Australia and South Australia. Its territory is approximately from Blyth range northerly to Lake Macdonald, including the Tomkinson and Petermann ranges, and reaching into Western Australia a considerable distance. It also extends into South Australia to the Musgrave ranges, Lake Amadeus, and the Ehrenberg ranges.

The grammatical structure of the Lorigya language is substantially the same as that of the Perth natives on the Swan river. The nouns, pronouns, verbs and other parts of speech are declined in an analogous manner, and some words of their vocabularies are almost identical. The Lorigya grammar is also the same in principle as that of the Arranda language, reported by me in the *Proceedings* (see page 322).

Nouns.

Nouns have number, gender and case.

Number.—There are the singular, dual and plural numbers, which are declined by postfixes; thus, kalaia, an emu; kalaiatara, a pair of emus; kalaiakura, several or many emus.

Gender.—Sex in the human family is distinguished by different words, as: patu, a man; kunka, a woman. For the lower animals, gender is indicated by the addition of the word manti for males and yakura for females. The ordinary native terms for “father” and “mother” are often employed for the same purpose.

Case.—Examples of the nominative, causative, genitive, and instrumental will be given, but there are likewise forms for the dative and ablative. The accusative is generally the same as the nominative.

The nominative indicates anything at rest and is without flexion, as: patu, a man; kunka, a woman; wonna, a yamstick.

Causative: This is used for any action described in a transitive verb, and takes the suffix *nku*, as: paturku waru pungu, a man a rock-wallaby killed.

The instrumental case takes the same suffix as the causative, as: kunkanku inalingi wonnanku pungu, a woman a porcupine with a yamstick killed.

Genitive: This case is formed by adding *ku* to the nominative, as: *meru partuku*, the womera of the man, or a man's womera; *wonna kunkaku*, a woman's yamstick.

Adjectives.

Adjectives follow the nouns which they qualify and are subject to the same inflexions. Comparison is effected by means of two positive statements, such as: this is good—that is bad. In the declensions of all the cases of nouns, and of their qualifying adjectives, there are modifications in the affixes, depending upon the termination of the word declined. Sometimes the affix of the noun is omitted, sometimes that of the adjective, this matter being regulated by the euphony of the sentence.

Pronouns.

Pronouns are inflected for number, person and case, and contain two forms of the first person in the dual and plural, marked "inclusive" and "exclusive" respectively in the following tables. The nominative pronouns are given in full.

<i>Singular</i>	{ 1st Person	I	Ngaiulu
	{ 2d Person	Thou	Nuntu
	{ 3d Person	He	Paluru
<i>Dual</i>	{ 1st Person	{ We, inclusive	Nuntungali
	{ 2d Person	{ We, exclusive	Ngali
	{ 3d Person	You	Numbali
<i>Plural</i>	{ 1st Person	They	Palumkutara
	{ 2d Person	{ We, inclusive	Nguntunganana
	{ 3d Person	{ We, exclusive	Nganana
		You	Ngurangari
		They	Tana

The possessive pronouns are as under:

<i>Singular</i>	{ 1st Person	Mine	Ngaiuku
	{ 2d Person	Thine	Nuntuba
	{ 3d Person	His	Palumba
<i>Dual</i>	{ 1st Person	{ Ours, inclusive	Nuntungalimba
	{ 2d Person	{ Ours, exclusive	Ngalimba
	{ 3d Person	Yours	Numbalimba
<i>Plural</i>	{ 1st Person	Theirs	Palumbakutara
	{ 2d Person	{ Ours, inclusive	Nuntunganamba
	{ 3d Person	{ Ours, exclusive	Nganamba
		Yours	Ngurangarimba
		Theirs	Tanamba

I am not yet in receipt of sufficiently definite information to furnish details of the remaining parts of the Lorigya grammar, but the subject will receive further attention in the near future.

THE ERLISTOUN TRIBE.

I have not been able to obtain the name of the tribe occupying the country between Menzies and Lake Wells, including Erlistoun, Laverton, Duketon and other places in the Mount Margaret gold field. This tract may be approximately defined as being situated between the 27th and 29th parallels of latitude, intercepted between the 121st and 125th meridians of longitude. I have provisionally adopted the name of the Erlistoun tribe for the aborigines of this region for purposes of reference. The center of the tract of country indicated is approximately four hundred and fifty miles west of the western boundary of South Australia, and about the same distance northeast of Perth, the capital of Western Australia; in other words, about half way between Perth and the Petermann range on the boundary between the two states mentioned.

Any information, therefore, which we can collect and promulgate respecting the language of a tribe so situated must be of the highest value to the ethnologist, being a connecting link between the speech of the natives of Perth and those occupying the region on both sides of the boundary between Western Australia and the neighboring state of South Australia.

I have not yet succeeded in completing a grammar of the language spoken by the natives of the Erlistoun district, but I have been fortunate enough to find a competent and reliable resident of that part of the country, who has supplied me with a vocabulary of one hundred and three words taken down by himself from the lips of old blacks of both sexes, who were well known to him, and upon whom he could depend.

If we compare the vocabularies of the Erlistoun and the Loritya, printed side by side at the end of this monograph, we discover that thirty of the words are the same or practically the same, whilst eight others are very similar. That is to say, more than a third of the Erlistoun words are substantially the same as the corresponding words in the Loritya. I may state that my correspondent was altogether unacquainted with the Loritya dialect, and none of the natives of that tribe were within hundreds of miles of his home at Duketon. There was therefore no possibility of his inadvertently mixing the words of both tribes.

Then, if we compare the Erlistoun vocabulary with the one published by Sir George Grey in 1839 of the Perth language, we find that eleven of the words are the same and that six are closely similar. In 1903 I published a vocabulary of the dialect spoken at Roebourne, taken down by myself from a black fellow belonging to that portion of Western Australia. In comparing that vocabulary with the Erlistoun, six hundred miles distant, we notice that seven of the words are the same and two similar. These agreements in several words of the vocabularies of tribes separated from each other by many hundreds of miles point to a common origin of the speech of the people over a very large geographic area.

VOCABULARY.

The following vocabulary contains 127 words of the Loritya language and 103 of the Erlistoun. The words of a similar character are grouped together under separate headings instead of being arranged in alphabetical sequence.

It may be explained here that I sent the same category of English words to both my Loritya and Erlistoun correspondents, which enables us to make a ready comparison. In the case of my Roebourne vocabulary of 1903, referred to in an earlier page, I had a more or less different list of English words for which to obtain equivalents. This remark applies also to Sir George Grey's vocabulary. It is probable that if we were to go to Roebourne or Perth with the list of words contained in the attached vocabulary and interview the natives, the identity or resemblance of many more words could be established than we can see in the present list.

For the Loritya grammar and vocabulary I am indebted to Mr. C. F. T. Strehlow, who has known the tribe for several years. The vocabulary and other particulars of the Erlistoun natives were supplied by Mr. Kenneth Young. Both these men have been in correspondence with me for some time and I can rely upon their information, which was obtained direct from the aborigines.

<i>English.</i>	<i>Loritya.</i>	<i>Erlistoun.</i>
Mankind	Matu	Wongada
A man	Patu	bundhu
Father	katu	mummali

Elder brother	kuta	kudrolli
Younger brother	malunga	murlunga
Boy	ula	murdilla
Doctor	nangari	
Woman	kunka	nunga
Mother	yako	yaggoli
Elder sister	kangura	ludrolli
Younger sister	malangu	murlungu
Girl	kuyuna	tunguna
Infant	pipiri	diddi
Mother-in-law	wumaru	

THE HUMAN BODY, ETC.

Head	kata	kuddya
Eyes	kuru	guru
Nose	mula	mula
Tongue	talinya	mullin or midang
Teeth	kadidi	kardidi
Ears	pina	guran
Hand	mara	murra
Elbow	nguku	börk
Shoulder		birri-birri
Foot	tyina	dyinna
Knee	mardi.	murdi
Blood	ngurka	guyul
Fat	nit	nirdi
Bone	tarka	durga
Penis	kalu	wiba and wilo
Vagina	tyuka	nungna
Anus	kunnatan	buna
Excrement	kunna	guna
Urine	kumbu	

INANIMATE NATURE.

Sun	tyintu	tyindu
Moon	pira	kulga
Stars	tyil-tyana	mullai
Fire	waru	worro
Charcoal		yirriga
Smoke	buyu	buya
Water	kape	gabbi
Rain	ir-tyingi	tuda
Rainbow	kanturangu	yu-aro
Spring of water		tu-lu-o
Camp		ngura
The ground	manta	burna
Sand	karu	birria
A stone	buli	
Rock	walu	
Hill	puli-urta	
Pipe-clay	ikuna	tunba
Red ochre	ulba mapanu	murda

ANIMALS.

Opossum	waiyuta	waiada
Porcupine	inalingi	mingarri
Rock wallaby	waru	dyi-waigu
Euro	kanala	kulthalla

Red kangaroo	malu	
Bat	ulbulbine	muu-dyar
Dog	papa	wongu
Emu	kalaia	kullaia
Eaglehawk	katuwara	dedo
Pelican	kabilyalku	
Crow	kanka	karn-ga
Common magpie	urari	
Jay magpie	aputan-tyen-tyi	
Pee-wee	kurbaru	kudbaro
Curlew	wilu	
Owl	wiratu	
Iguana	wongapa	kud-bardai
Brown snake	maru-marura	liro
Carpet snake		mullawanna
Mussel	pira-pira	
Mosquito	kewinye	kumminga
Centipede	kanbarka	
Louse	kulu	win-ga

TREES AND PLANTS.

Red gum tree	itara	
White gum tree		yarda
Grass tree	ulunkuru	
Beefwood	il-tyan-tyi	
Desert oak	irgapa	
Cork tree		buruga
Narrow-leaf mulga		guya
Black mulga		win-dyal-ga
Honeysuckle		yurabuddi
Turpentine bush		giddi
Spinifex	untia ¹	bilya and tyan-bi
Bullrushes	unka	
Grass	puta	

IMPLEMENTS, UTENSILS, ETC.

Stone tomahawk	ilipi	yilgun
Stone knife	tula and irkili	gun-dyi
Spear	katyi	kar-dyi
Shield	ku-ti-tyi	tarro
Womera	meru	mirio
Boomerang	kali	birridi and wallanu
Club	kunti	kundi
Yamstick	wonna	yan-dya
Lower millstone	tyu-a	kuro
Upper millstone	miri	
Trough, wooden	kuntili	wiria
Girdle	nanpa	nanbar
Apron	matati	gun-dya
Nose-peg	unati	mu-le-iddi
Bullroarer	wunninge	

ADJECTIVES.

Large	buntu	gunanna
Small	wima	tuguni
Straight	tukururu	tugarraru
Crooked	kalikali	grin-grin

¹There are two sorts of spinifex, one of which grows on the sandhills, and the other on rocky ground. The natives have names for both.

Good	pala	
Bad	kuya	
Hot	aranta	bubbarra
Cold	warri	yalda
Hungry	a-in-ma	
Tired	burka	nuria
Greedy	waiangulkunmi	
Stinking	boka	yuna
Thirsty		tan-dyarra

VERBS.

Stand	ngarange	ngarrago
Sit	ninanye	illago
Walk or go	yenanye	thulgargo
Run	talkalunganye	tinyarn
Eat	ngalkunye	nannago
Drink	tyi-kinyi	bubbago
See	nanganye	dargo
Hear	kulinye	kurilgo
Chop	mutunye	
Bite	patanye	
Talk	wonkanye	wongi
Laugh	inkanye	ēgarri
Beat	bunganye	bungugo
Give	yunganye	
Throw	runkanye	
Carry	katinye	
Pick up	mungaratakanye	mangugo
Throw away	wonniriyenanye	wonnigo
Steal	mulatanka manyinye	woggalgo

NUMERALS,

One	kuta	} Not obtained.
Two	kutara	
Several	mankura	

ADVERBS.

Yes	o-wa	} Not obtained.
No	we-ya	

CORRECTION.

In volume XXXVIII of this journal, page 77, table II, then publishing the eight intermarrying sections of the Warramonga tribe at Tennant's Creek, Northern Territory, I regret that some errors crept in during my rearrangement of the section names from one of my previous tables. Since then I have published several correct tables, but it is only necessary to refer the reader to one of them, given in *The American Antiquarian*, Vol. XXVIII, pp. 87 seq., table IV, which supplies full details of the intermarrying laws in force among the Warramonga natives.

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